

# Parental Concerns / Complaints Policy

**Date of approval by governors' committee:** 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 (tbc)

**Next review date:** Spring 2020

**Author of Policy:** Principal

## General Points

The BSA prides itself on the quality of teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. From time to time, however, parents may wish to raise a concern with the School.

In such cases, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with the steps set out below.

Parents and prospective parents have access to this policy via the school website.

## Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

It is hoped that most concerns can be resolved quickly and informally. At all times staff will listen carefully and patiently; in doing so, they will recognise that the issue is of concern to the parent and/or pupil. Sometimes the concern might use email as a means of communication but depending on the seriousness of the concern or complaint it might be better to meet face-to-face.

If parents have a concern, they should initially contact their child's subject/class/form teacher.

In many cases, the matter will be resolved straight away to the parent's and teacher's satisfaction. If the teacher cannot resolve the matter alone, it may be necessary for him/her to involve the respective Primary Co-ordinator/Head of Department or Deputy Head/Head of School.

Concerns made directly to a Primary Co-ordinator/Head of Department/Deputy Head of School or Head of School would usually be referred to the relevant teacher. However, if parents have a concern about a member of staff they can approach the Primary Co-ordinator/Head of Department/Deputy Head of School or Head of School directly, without having seen the subject/class/form teacher.

The member of staff dealing with the concern/complaint will make a written record of all concerns and the date on which they were received (see appendix 1). Should the matter not be resolved within 15 working days or in the event that the teacher and the parent fail to reach a satisfactory resolution then the parents will be advised to proceed with their concern in writing to Stage 2 of this procedure.

## Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

If the concern cannot be resolved on an informal basis and the parents have already gone through Stage 1, then the parents should put their concern in writing to the Principal. The Principal will decide, after considering the concern, the appropriate course of action to take. Action will be taken within ten working days of receiving the concern.

In most cases, the Principal will meet the parents concerned to discuss the matter. If possible, a resolution will be reached at this stage. It may be necessary, however, for the Principal to carry out further investigations.

The Principal will keep written records of all meetings and interviews held in relation to the concern.

Once the Principal is satisfied that, so far as is practicable, all of the relevant facts have been established, a decision will be made and parents will be informed of this decision in writing. The Principal will also give reasons for the decision. It is possible that the complaint could result in disciplinary or competency procedures being enacted against a member of staff. In such a case the Principal would not give details of the action taken but simply say that action will be taken.

In the unlikely event that parents remain unsatisfied with the decision, they should proceed to Stage 3, where they are entitled to a hearing with a panel of 3 governors.

### **Stage 3 – Panel of Governors Hearing**

A concern/complaint would only go to Stage 3 if the concern/complaint had already gone through Stages 1 and 2 and the parents were still not happy with the action taken or that they feel that their concerns have not been dealt with in a proper manner.

Parents should contact the Clerk to the governors ([board@bsalex.net](mailto:board@bsalex.net)) to state that they wish to take the complaint/concern to Stage 3. They should send a written statement giving details of the concern/complaint and why they are not happy with the way it has been dealt with and any outcome that has resulted. They will not be permitted to bring further new information to the hearing and so it is important that they include all necessary detail in this statement. The Clerk to the Governors would then forward this to the Chair of Governors and also the Principal.

The Chair of Governors would then convene a panel of 3 governors to hear the case. The 3 governors must have had no prior involvement in the case and have no connection with the complainant. The Principal would be asked to submit in writing the school's case. The panel hearing should be held within 15 working days of the clerk to the governors receiving the complaint. The parents and Principal should be invited to the hearing. The parents can request to have a friend accompany them and similarly the Principal can request to have a relevant member of staff attend the hearing. First the 3 governors would meet to discuss the statements received by the parents and the Principal. They would then come to an initial conclusion and at the same time formulate any questions they wished to ask the parents or Principal. The parents and Principal together with a friend and relevant member of staff would be invited to meet the panel – all parties would attend together. The panel would then ask any questions it wishes to the parties involved. Both parties would then leave, and then the panel would have further discussion to finalise their conclusions and recommendations with regard to any action they feel is necessary. The clerk to the governors would then inform both parties in writing within 3 working days. The clerk to the governors must attend the entire hearing and take confidential notes. The decision of this panel will be final and so there will be no further appeals process.

Parents can be assured that all concerns will be treated seriously and confidentially. Correspondence, statements and records will be kept confidential. However, it is possible that at some time in the future external inspectors or accreditors may need to sample evidence of concerns and the school's procedures for dealing with them and will in such circumstances be given access to any evidence gathered.

# Appendix I

## Concerns/Complaints Form

Member(s) of staff to whom the concern was expressed:

Person expressing the concern:

Parent of:

Date:

Nature of the concern:

Action taken: